

323 ICE SIGNING

The purpose of ice signing is to alert motorists of possible icy conditions as they enter a region of potential icing, and to warn motorists at chronic icy locations within the region.

Both regional ice alert signs and spot location ice warning signs shall be permanently mounted and of folding construction. The signs shall be opened no later than October 1st of each year, and closed no sooner than April 15th of the following winter season.

323.1 REGIONAL ICE ALERT SIGNS

The Regional Ice Alert Signs (W4-6Z) are intended to alert drivers that they are entering regions of the State where there is a potential for icy roadway conditions. The location of these signs will be determined by factors such as maintenance experience, roadway elevation, accident experience, and engineering judgment. These signs may be placed at State highway junctions within the regions as well. An initial review of the State Highway System to determine the locations of these signs will be performed based on the factors mentioned above. Based on experience, few changes to the location of Regional Ice Alert Signs are anticipated; therefore, future revisions to the placement of these signs will be made on an “as needed” basis.

323.2 SPOT LOCATION ICE WARNING SIGNS

The placement of Spot Location Ice Warning Signs (W7-14Y) is intended for isolated short segments of roadway where icy conditions cannot be reasonably anticipated by motorists based on the conditions of adjacent roadway sections. They are not intended to advise motorists of general roadway conditions such as continuously snow covered and icy sections of roadway throughout an area. The Spot Location Ice Warning Sign should be used conservatively to command respect by drivers. Recurrent icy spots on the highway are typically present for only a small percentage of time that the ice warning signs are posted. If every possible spot location in the State was signed, drivers would see many ice warning signs along the side of the highway and very few icy spots, thereby breeding disrespect for the signs. Therefore, to maintain an effective sign warning system, the use of the sign will be limited to those locations with a persistent history of ice-related accidents, or where the Regional Traffic Engineer determines such a sign is needed, provided it is in compliance with this policy.

The following criteria shall be used to determine the location of Spot Location Ice Warning Signs (W7-14Y):

1. Since accidents in snowy, icy conditions can often be attributable to many types of unusual circumstances, such as speed too fast for conditions, equipment failures, driver impairment, etc., the W7-14Y sign will be limited to locations where there is a history of accidents resulting from the snowy, icy spot conditions described above. Installation of a W7-14Y sign may be considered with the occurrence of at least one ice-related accident in three different winter seasons over the most recent five year accident evaluation period.

To initiate the implementation of this guide, accidents coded as icy/snowy roadway conditions were reviewed for the entire State Highway System prior to the adoption of this guide as an initial survey to meet the criteria for spot location signing. Once this guide is adopted, potential spot locations will be reviewed on an “as needed” basis at the discretion of the Regional Traffic Engineer.

2. In addition, the W7-14Y signs may be considered in unusual cases where the Regional Traffic Engineer deems such a sign may be needed. **The conservative use of the Spot Location Ice Warning Sign advocated in this policy shall be applied by the Regional Traffic Engineer. Such locations shall be documented and the accident history reviewed based on the criteria stated above.**

In urban areas, the use of Spot Location Ice Warning Signs is discouraged, due to the lower driving speeds and familiarity of the public with the driving environment, except in special cases where the Regional Traffic Engineer by his discretionary judgment determines there is a need.